

**Humboldt State University  
Children's Center  
2013-2014 Annual Report**

## **1. Mission**

State your department mission. Discuss how the unit supports the broader university mission. Discuss how the unit evaluates its effectiveness in meeting the divisional mission.

### **Narrative**

The mission of the HSU Children's Center is to provide affordable, convenient, high quality child development services for families of Humboldt State University students. Secondly, the Children's Center employs and provides a comprehensive on-going training program for HSU students.

HSU Children's Center provides HSU students and members of the university community high-quality, convenient, early care and education services for children from 1 year of age to kindergarten entry. Program services for HSU students are available on a sliding scale based on income, most students receive free child care. The Children's Center also provides HSU students the opportunity to observe, participate in service learning, field placements and employment opportunities in the program. Student employees participate at every level of the program and have opportunities for professional training, practicing real-life work skills and leadership. The Children's Center supports the goals of Humboldt State University by supporting the students engaged in our community to succeed, persist and graduate. For students with children, the services provided by the Children's Center are essential to their ability to engage in their studies. High quality, affordable, and convenient child care services allow student parents to focus on their studies without undue worry about their children's wellbeing. We also provide student parents with a full spectrum of family supports, providing a safety net in terms of housing, food, access to services in the community, and opportunities to connect with other student parents.

For student assistants, the Children's Center provides much needed employment opportunities. We also provide a safe and welcoming community where student assistants can meet each other, engage in meaningful activities, and be mentored by professional staff. Student assistants have opportunities for training, setting goals, self-evaluation, and feedback from their professional mentors, and the acquisition of real life skills that have value in the marketplace. The Children's Center is a place where student assistants can feel at home, ask for help, and be supported and appreciated.

The Children's Center measures its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission in a myriad of ways. We ask student parents and student assistants for feedback, both informal and formally through surveys each year. We operate a Parent Advisory Board, where students can share in the decision making processes of the Children's Center and share ideas and concerns. We are evaluated both internally and externally by the California Department of Education (CDE) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and we report on our

goals annually to CDE, NAEYC, and specifically on the retention and graduation of student parents to the US Department of Education.

## **2. Goals**

Describe the service under review, emphasizing the unit's goals, and its impact on student success. Goals might include delivery of a specific service, compliance with state or federally mandated monitoring, or other activities directed at providing support to the institution or to students.

\*If the unit's goals have changed since the last self-evaluation, explain how and why they have changed. Show how the changes responded to changing needs, technologies, external requirements, and/or other relevant factors.

\*This will be accomplished in the second year of review.

## **Narrative**

### **Program Goals:**

- To provide necessary child care services in support of HSU students' academic success, retention and graduation.
- To provide interested HSU students with opportunities to work in a high-quality children's program, develop work skills, participate actively in the operation of the children's program, and to practice leadership skills.
- Actively seek funding opportunities that support the Children's Center program, especially funding to subsidize care for students.
- To complete the NAEYC Accreditation process and maintain our accredited status.
- To support professional and student staff in developing professional skills, knowledge, and growing in their practice of child development and student affairs.
- To work with parents to provide a program that meets the needs of each family and child and respect to diversity in race, culture, family structure, and language.
- To provide parents with support, education and desired referrals to meet their family needs.
- To provide stable, intimate, and individualized relationships with children and parents.
- To provide a safe, predictable, and developmentally appropriate environment for children of different ages and abilities.
- To provide care that is respectful and responsive to children and parents.
- To support and challenge each child's growth in all areas recognizing each child's uniqueness and individual timetable.
- To furnish children with a wide variety of experiences which will challenge their abilities and encourage their interests.
- To help children develop problem solving, communication and negotiation skills to facilitate positive relationships.
- To provide a program that reflects the lives of the children and families as well as the diversity found in society.

### **Goals for Families:**

- To be active participants in their child's school experience.
- To be active participants in program planning and evaluation.
- To develop support network to help meet family needs.
- To secure necessary services to assist in meeting family needs.
- To succeed, persist and graduate.

### **Goals for Student Employees:**

- To be active participants in their classrooms and the program.
- To be active participants in program planning and evaluation.
- To develop skills and personal attributes necessary to real-life work success.
- To participate in educational opportunities and integrate and apply knowledge to real-life situations.
- To develop and practice leadership skills.
- To be successful in their academic endeavors, to persist and graduate.

### **Curriculum Goals for Children:**

#### ***Children are personally and socially competent:***

- To show self-awareness and a positive self concept
- To demonstrate effective social and interpersonal skills
- To demonstrate effective self-regulation
- To show awareness, acceptance, understanding, and appreciation of others' feelings, needs, similarities and differences
- To show growing abilities in communication and language

#### ***Children are effective learners:***

- To show an interest in learning new things
- To show cognitive competence and problem solving skills
- To show an interest in real life mathematical and science concepts
- To demonstrate emerging communication and literacy skills
- To demonstrate creative expression through art, music, dance and drama
- To develop non-stereotypical understanding of diversity in culture, family, ability, language, age and gender
- To demonstrate understanding of community in which they live

#### ***Children are safe and healthy:***

- To respond to and initiate personal care routines with greater independence
- To demonstrate awareness of safety practices that minimize risk and support healthy growth
- To show increasing independence in making health life choices

### *Children show physical and motor competence:*

- To move in coordinated way using large muscles in arms and legs
- To develop ability to coordinate use of hands to reach, manipulate, release with increasing strength and control
- To develop ability to balance self in space
- To develop use of eyes and hands together to perform tasks

HSU Children's Center's goals are consistent with the goals of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management's goals. Given the rural nature of HSU, student parents' ability to access convenient, affordable, high quality child care services is essential to their success in their academic programs. The Children's Center provides comprehensive family support services, including access to a family support worker. These services meet student's needs for access to medical services, food, housing, and other services, helping student's to focus on academics and stay in school. The Children's Center also provides social activities that help connect student parents to other student parents and the larger community. Student parents are actively involved in the program, including opportunities to shape policies and procedures, and evaluate the program.

Student employees are provided with a number of supports, including compensation but also community relationships and opportunities for personal and professional development. The Children's Center provides numerous opportunities for students to attend training. The program supports goal setting, self-reflection, mentoring, and evaluation. Students are actively involved in all aspects of the program and practice real-world job skills, including opportunities to lead. The Children's Center shares the values of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management and strives to offer program services that support:

- Student learning
- Community
- Collaboration
- Commitment

To that end, the Children's Center provides the highest quality children's program and supports the development of student parents and student employees. We value diverse ideas and celebrate the multiple perspectives that having a diverse community allows. We actively partner with faculty, staff, students and the community to increase our effectiveness and support the success of students. And, we are committed to providing the highest quality early care and education services, being ethical and student centered.

### **3. Department Effectiveness**

Describe your clients in terms of their roles on campus (student, staff, administrators, etc.), and reflect on whether you are serving the groups you are expected to serve (in terms of diversity, program goals, etc.). Describe how the unit engages all members in the discussion, review, assessment and relevant factors. How and when has your unit assessed program outcomes, and how have you responded to the results? What changes have been made based on the result of the assessed outcome?

If data is available, describe how well your program is doing in terms of the following outcomes:

- Volume of unit activity (number of students/clients served, number of appointments, etc.)
- Efficiency (responsiveness, timeliness, number of requests processed, etc.)
- Effectiveness of service in accomplishing intended outcomes (accuracy, completeness, etc.)
- Client/student satisfaction with services (data needs to be disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, abilities, etc.)

Describe how program or achievement outcomes relate to the unit goals.

**Narrative**

**Children's Center Clients - Children & Families**

The Children’s Center is licensed to serve 40 toddlers, one to three years, and 82 preschoolers, three to five years in our on-campus center and our 10th Street Preschool. The Children’s Center's mission is to provide convenient, affordable, high quality childcare services to university students, staff, and faculty. As a student focused program, the Children’s Center is designed to accommodate the unique and changing scheduling needs of student parents. The majority of the 144 children served in spring 2014 were children of student parents 60%, with staff & faculty children representing 20% and community children, 20%. Our community percentage increased as a result of adding the 10th Street Preschool and our

*Children Served by Classification and Age Group – 2013-2014*

	<b>Student Parent</b>		<b>Staff/Faculty Parent</b>	<b>Community Parent</b>
	<b>Low-Income</b>	<b>Higher-Income</b>		
Toddler	35	3	25	7
Preschool	47	2	24	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>82 (57%)</b>	<b>5 (3%)</b>	<b>29 (20%)</b>	<b>28 (20%)</b>

The Children's Center serves families from diverse cultural, language, socio-economic backgrounds. During the 2013-14 year, we served 82 student parents. Of those students, 2.8% self-identified as Black, 2.8% as Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 5.6% as Hispanic, student families were more diverse than staff & faculty families, which is consistent with the HSU Fact Book. Families at the Children's Center consist of more Native American and White families than the general HSU population.

Out of 82 student parents we served, 18 graduated (11 BA, 7 Credentials or MA). None of our student parents were entering freshman, 2 were sophomores, and the majorities were juniors, seniors or graduate students. For our CCAMPIS grant we track persistence rates for subsidized student parents and they are consistently around 91%. Student parents are highly motivated to

complete their degrees and move into the employment sector. Student parents cite the Children's Center as essential to complete their program of study and graduate in our parent survey each year.

### **Children's Center Clients - Student Staff**

The Children's Center employed just over 100 students during the 2013-14 academic year. Staff at the Children's Center included significantly more Hispanic students than represented in the general HSU student population. Both student parents and student employees consisted of significantly more females than males, only 14% of student parents were males and 4.6% of student employees were male. That enrolling parents are mostly female is consistent with societal expectations, and that students employed by the Children's Center are mostly female and significantly Hispanic is not unexpected but interesting and bears more investigation. I wonder what the demographic make up of the Child Development major might be? Native Americans are over-represented in both our student parent and child populations compared to HSU student population, but evenly across groups in the center community.

Students who worked for us in 2013-14 came from a variety of majors - Child Development (42), LSEE (15), Psychology (8), Journalism (3), Biology (2), Fisheries (2), Social Work (5), International Studies (2), Anthropology, Art History, Business, Computers, Dance, English, French, Chinese, History, Kinesiology, Marine Biology, Political Science, Pre-Nursing, and Undeclared. Of 108 student assistants, 18 graduated with their Bachelor's degrees and 90 are planning to return to HSU and to the Children's Center. This means that 17% of students working at the Children's Center graduated and 83% are persisting, for a combined persistence and graduation rate of 100%. In interviews student assistants cited both their love of the children they cared for and the program, their pay, but mostly they talked about the friendships they formed with coworkers and supervisors when asked what aspects of their experience supported their continued studies at HSU.

### **Responsiveness to the Needs of the Children's Center Community**

Student parents indicated on the 2011-12 Parent Survey that they needed later care to meet in study groups and attend labs for math and science courses. In response, the Children's Center offered an extra hour of "after care" from 5:30-6:30PM. This service was free to subsidized student parents who had a need. Fourteen families utilized the aftercare hour routinely during the semester, with an average of four children, and a high of eight children. Students who utilized after care hours found them "extremely important" to their success in completing their course of study.

The Children's Center responded to a community need and took over the operation of a center at 1695 10th Street in Spring of 2013. During the summer of 2014 the site was renovated to provide a better preschool classroom and add a toddler classroom. Staff was hired and a tremendous amount of work was done by every member of the Children's Center staff, Housing, Plant Operations, Support Divisions and Management that led to the site being licensed and operating full the entire academic year. The site was also included in our site visit for

accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and was accredited - six months after it opened. This is exceptional.

Children's Center staff organized and facilitated over 50 hours of training for student assistants. Trainings included a variety of topics from Mandated Reporter training to how to protect your back when lifting. Student Assistants were able to track their trainings in their Student Handbooks so they might include them in future resumes. Staff at the Children's Center also helped student assistants to complete self-evaluations, set goals, and reflect on their work.

Families at the Children's Center were invited to over 30 social events and trainings. They had the opportunity to meet with the director and teachers before their child entered the Children's Center for enrollment and orientations. Families met with teachers each semester to reflect on their development and learning, and to collaborate with teaching staff about what they wanted for their children. Families were invited to Parent Advisory Board meetings (10), to Potlucks (2 in their classrooms and 3 center-wide), to sit on hiring committees (7), and to complete a Family Survey asking a wide variety of questions about their experience at the Children's Center. The Children's Center was open 234 days, and provided over 150,000 hours of child care.

#### **4. Department Improvement**

Discuss how the unit addresses improvement. What activities has your unit engaged in to improve the administrative support service and environment?

#### **Narrative**

The Children's Center engages in continuous assessment, reflection and improvement activities as a part of our daily culture. Each aspect of the program and every member of the Children's Center community are included as we move through the days, weeks, and year. The Children's Center reports on these activities to our many funders and other interested parties - including but not limited to Humboldt State University, Student Affairs, the US Department of Education, the California Department of Education, Northcoast Children's Services and the National Office of Head Start/Early Head Start, Humboldt First 5 Commission, our Parent Advisory Board, and the Children's Center community.

#### **Child Assessment and Curriculum Development**

The development and learning of the children is assessed using the California Department of Education Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) assessment system. Each child is assessed within the first 60 days of the beginning of fall term (or whenever enrolled) using the age appropriate instrument. The Classroom Teacher analyses the classroom data and develops a Summary of Findings identifying Action Steps to guide further curriculum for the group and individual children. The follow-up on the plan is monitored. The DRDP is conducted again for each child in six months with another Summary of Findings and Action Plan to be followed.

## **Program Assessment and Planning**

Annually all parents are involved in a Parent Evaluation Survey of the overall Children's Center program. The results are reported to parents through the Parent Advisory Board and newsletter along with program changes identified through the survey. Results are also reported to CDE in the Annual Reporting Process and goals are set utilizing the data collected. Annually an Environmental Rating is conducted on each classroom using either the ITERS or ECRS-R Rating Scales. The Classroom Teacher and another staff member rate each classroom and average scores. Each Classroom Teacher then prepares a Plan of Action to address areas for improvement. The follow-up is monitored. Each Classroom Teacher is evaluated annually and each student employee is evaluated each semester. The evaluation process involves a self-evaluation and evaluation by the immediate supervisor. In discussing the evaluation together future goals are set and past goals reviewed.

The Director and Office Manager conduct a review of the administration of the program utilizing the California Department of Education (CDE) Contract Monitoring Review instrument. Every three years a Department of Ed consultant conducts the review. A Plan of Action must be submitted to CDE on any items on the instrument that the program does not meet. Items must be corrected within 45 days. At the end of Spring Semester the core staff (Director, Assistant Director, Classroom Teachers, and Office Manager) have a planning retreat to review the program year, plan for the next year and the future. As a requirement of funding by the California Department of Education the Children's Center must submit an Annual Report including the findings from all assessment tools and establishing a Plan of Action for the future. This is developed by core staff and the Parent Advisory Board. The planned program changes are reported to families at the first Advisory Board meeting in the fall and in the first newsletter.

The Director, Assistant Director and Office Manager also conduct evaluations and periodic reviews for the California Child Care Food Program. These reviews occur at least 3 times per year in both the Toddler and Preschool classrooms. Annually the Director collects data and reports on student retention and graduation to the US Department of Education as required for the CCAMPIS funding. The entire program is audited for procedural and fiscal compliance by an outside auditor and the results are reported to the university and the California Department of Education.

In addition to all of the above, the Children's Center voluntarily participates in the Accreditation program of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. This accreditation program is a five year process that begins with a program self-study, program evaluation by the teaching staff, program evaluation by the families enrolled in the program, and outside validation by a professional assessor. On April 23, 2014 the Children's Center was informed that it has been re-accredited until May 1, 2019. Our scores were exceptionally high:

1. Relationships 100%
2. Curriculum 100%
3. Teaching 100%
4. Assessment of Child Progress 100+%\*
5. Health 86%



- 6. Teachers 100%
- 7. Families 100+%
- 8. Community Relationships 100+%
- 9. Physical Environment 88%
- 10. Leadership and Management 100+%

\*Score includes credit given for meeting Emerging Criteria.

### **Changes during the 13-14 Program Year**

During the 12-13 year we were approached by a local child care program that was failing and asked to take them over. After reflection, consultation, and approval from the university, we did take over the operation at 1695 10th Street. Over the course of the summer we renovated the space and brought it up to university standards. We also hired and trained staff. While continuing to serve the families in the program, we expanded our services to the university community as well and added a toddler classroom. We were also able to secure funding from the California Department of Education to subsidize most of the child care spaces at the new center, further supporting the needs of low-income students.

Summer of 2013 we completely renovated the building - improving the preschool classrooms and adding a toddler classroom. This site was operated at full capacity all 13-14 academic year, adding 24 preschool and 12 toddler spaces to our capacity. It was also visited during our accreditation site visit and received a score of 98/100. This is exceptional.

Various program ideas and goals were culled from the assessments and evaluations over the 2012-2013 year. From the Parent Survey, where 100% of families said they were Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the Children's Center program and 100% of families said they felt their child was safe, we looked at suggestions to expand our hours of operation, change our food program, increase our capacity, and pay the staff millions of dollars.

### **From our CDE Annual Report we have the following program goals:**

1. Staff will encourage conversations in small groups that enable children to use expressions of empathy towards others.
2. Staff will provide opportunities for children to foster feelings and expressions of empathy (helping children care for each other, providing babies, etc.)
3. Staff will be trained on ways to foster empathy within children's play.
4. Reflect on process and add any new steps necessary.
5. Reflect and evaluate process.

1. Staff will encourage conversations in small groups which include concepts of classification and matching.
2. Staff will provide opportunities for classification and matching (shape sorters, cleaning up toys, matching activities, etc.).
3. Staff will be trained on ways to foster classification and matching within children's play.

4. Reflect on process and add any new steps necessary.
5. Reflect and evaluate process.

Environment and materials:

1. New 2nd Step Kits and posters will be provided for each classroom when core staff go to training at HCOE on August 27th
2. Posters will be posted in the classroom that prompt student staff and children in how to problem solve and calm down

Staff:

1. Core staff will receive training at HCOE and will then train student staff in how to use 2nd Step at ongoing fall student staff meetings and trainings
2. Provide student staff with handouts (and post in classroom) that give scenarios and scripts to respond to children's conflicts

Children:

1. Implement 2nd Step activities into Circle Times
2. Plan regular Small Groups utilizing 2nd Step activities
3. Utilize Problem Solving Board
4. Continue to implement "Acts of Kindness" recognition and focus with children at group times and throughout the daily routines

Parents:

1. Introduce 2nd Step at Parent Orientations
2. Include information for parents about 2nd step and general problem solving steps as well as supporting children in developing impulse control in Parent Newsletters
3. Incorporate how we support development in these areas during our slide show for Parent Ed Night in October

Reflect on process and add any new steps necessary.

Reflect and evaluate process.

Environment & Materials:

1. Improve outdoor literacy materials to encourage phonological awareness, letter recognition, language development and emergent writing, including writing clipboards, signs and labels, word banks, magnifying glasses, and writing implements
2. Post an alphabet chart in each room
3. Add hanging notepad to circle time areas

4. Provide each child their own notebook for a journal to use at school whenever they want

Staff:

1. Train staff in how to support children as they learn to write their names and sign in
2. Develop a booklet or handout of our favorite songs, including rhyming, finger-plays, name and story songs, call and response and sign-language songs and songs in other languages that help support children's development of phonemic awareness and letter and word knowledge
3. Encourage use of turn lists and instruct staff in how to coach children to write their own names on lists
4. Teach staff how to spell out names whenever they write them on art work

Children:

1. Children will recognize 10 or more letters by the end of the school year
2. Children will be able to identify the sound that their name begins with by the end of the year
3. Plan small group activities and songs that incorporate rhyming and word blending

Parents:

1. Include information about milestones of literacy development in parent handouts, parent education and conferences
2. Include information in the Parent Newsletter about how the activities at school support literacy development and small motor development
3. Encourage reading at home – ask children about books they read at home, talk to parents about what books children are reading at home, give away an age appropriate book each month for children to take home.

Reflect on progress and successes and add new steps if necessary.

Reflect and evaluate process.

Throughout our assessment and evaluation this is our most significant goal - to build a new facility that would be modern, larger, and with the capacity to serve more children including infants and children with special needs. Such a center would also allow us to serve more students, faculty and staff.

## **5. Department Environment**

- 1) Discuss the unit's environment, including the relationships among staff and program engagement with other units or support areas.
- 2) Discuss the unit's engagement in institutional efforts and activities.
- 3) Discuss facilities, staff and equipment assigned to the unit and how well they support unit goals.
- 4) Indicate the specific hours the unit operates and describe how the scheduled hours of availability meet the demand for services. If the unit operates during other than normal business hours, specify how these additional times meet the needs of other units/programs/students.
- 5) Describe the influences that external factors, such as state laws, changing demographics, and the characteristics of the students/clients served have on the structure and services of the program and how the unit addresses these factors.
- 6) Describe the interactions between this unit and other units/programs on campus and any particular influences these interactions have on the ability of the unit to meet its goals.

## **Narrative**

### **Children's Center Work Culture**

HSU Children's Center employs a diverse, warm, highly educated staff, with many years of experience not only teaching but here at the Children's Center. All teachers hold a minimum of a BA in Early Childhood Development, and four teachers are pursuing their Master's degrees and the Director and Assistant Director hold Master's Degrees. Staff have been at the Children's Center for an average of 10 years. The staff work collaboratively and excellent relationships.

### **Children's Center Staff Engagement with HSU and the larger Community**

HSU Children's Center staff are actively involved in events and trainings at the Children's Center, on campus, in the community and statewide. Specific to Student Affairs, staff participated in HOP, Convocation, Staff & Faculty BBQ, events held by other departments, Student Affairs Welcome, Student Affairs Council, Staff Parties, Part-time Jobs Fair, Pancake Dinners, Book Circle and other events on campus. Staff also actively participated in Student Development trainings and other presentations by Student Affairs. Children's Center staff held trainings that brought other early care and education professional to HSU - including hosting a meeting of the California Early Childhood Mentor Teachers on site.

Staff at the Children's Center are Mentor Teachers, active in the Humboldt Association for the Education of Young Children and the California Association for the Education of Young Children, serve on the Humboldt Local Child Care Planning Council and the Child Care Subcommittee for the Humboldt First 5 Commission, serve on the board of the Council for California State University Children's Centers, and the National Coalition for Campus Child Care. Teachers made presentation at the state convention of CAEYC. Children's Center staff actively pursue educational opportunities

#### Relationships between the Children's Center and other HSU Departments

The Children's Center held over fifty events for children and their families, and 36 events or trainings for student staff. Staff collaborated with community agencies to bring students activities and trainings on Nutrition, Parenting, Active Play, Creative Dance, and Music for Young Children. Staff also collaborated with other departments at HSU to enhance the Children's Center services, these departments include CCAT, Plant Operations, Housing, Library, University Police, Fisheries, Dance, Theater Arts, English, Photography, Marketing and Communication, Kinesiology, the Child Development Lab, and Art. The Children's Center receives great support from the university community, and could not do the work we do without their support.

#### Children's Center Physical Plant and Daily Operations

The Children's Center is housed in three renovated houses built in the 1930s and the old Schmidtbauer Lumber Loading Office at 1695 10th Street. In addition we have one classroom constructed where a garage used to be, and a portable building that houses a classroom. Our buildings and environment are well loved, and well supported by plant operations and grounds on campus. Off campus we are working with a private company to provide cleaning and collaborate with the owner to keep up on maintenance. Plant Operations charges us for all work at our offsite building and for some work on campus. We have a Service Agreement for campus services, such as accounting, mail delivery and payroll.

Many campus departments support the work we do either directly (accounting, plant operations, police, shipping and receiving, human resources...) or indirectly through service learning, field placements, observations, dance and drama classes do performances, CCAT collaborates with us on activities for families and children, and many others. We have had great support from housing during our renovations at 1695 10th Street. Sponsored Programs supports us in the administration of our U.S. Department of Education funding.

The Children's Center strives to support sustainable practices. Children and food staff collect food waste for composting. Compost is used in our own classroom gardens. Recycling is taught in the preschool classrooms, where children are taught to put paper waste in recycling bins and to use paper towels and toilet paper wisely. We also worked with Power Save Green Humboldt project to reduce water and energy use. Over the course of the year we made changes and worked with Power Save staff, and in the Spring we were certified Gold by their organization. We are looking into using stainless dishes for the children - a response to student parents' concerns about plastics.

We had a place on the Master Plan and Architectural Plans for a new Children's Center in 2006. This has been on hold, and possibly is not even considered any longer. The Children's Center would greatly benefit from a new building and yards, specifically designed for the work that we do. We always have a substantial waiting list, and even have funding to pay for more children than we can serve. Unfortunately, the Children's Center will never be able to amass the millions of dollars necessary for a building on its own. We will need creative thinking to find financing that would pay for a building. While we currently cannot ask for increases in student fees, other CSU Children's Centers have passed initiatives that raised student fees specifically for the building and maintenance of new buildings.

The Children's Center is open from 7:30AM-5:30PM, with one classroom open until 6:30PM during the academic semesters. Staff arrive each day by 7AM, and almost every week work at least one evening for a parent event or a staff meeting, leaving after 7:30PM. We employ 14 state employees, from 2-7 foundation employees, and approximately 100 student assistants. We are open during the entire academic year, several weeks in January, spring break, and most of the summer. This reflects our commitment to student families, who often work in addition to being students, and our staff and faculty families.

## Sources

- [XLS] 13-14 Child Ctr D40030 PREP Staffing rpt April 2014
- [XLS] 13-14 Child Ctr D430, 451 PREP Staffing rpt Nov 2013

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Present any conclusions and recommendations resulting from the self-evaluation process, referencing any of the topics in the study. Include information on how the unit engages all unit members in the self-evaluation dialogue and how everyone participates in the program review process.

- 1) Summarize your areas of strength and areas that need improvement.
- 2) Identify strategies for the future. Discuss any projected changes and anticipate how the changes may affect staffing, facilities, equipment, and other operational areas.

## Narrative

The Children's Center has a 42 year history as a high-quality program supporting student parents and employing and training student staff. This long practice of excellence has created a strong foundation of high expectation and deep respect in our community. This past year as we moved past an incident that endangered the program and caused trauma to our staff and when we expanded our program to embrace a failing center and bring it up to our standards of practice, we have leaned heavily on this foundation and the relationships built over time both within the Children's Center staff and with the professional community at large. This year we have many new professional staff, new routines and procedures to develop at our new site, and review from the California Department of Education, the Child Care Food Program, and the final steps in becoming re-accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. We have expanded our program to serve almost 50% more children, increased our student staff and completed the building renovations at the 10th Street Preschool and the kitchen renovation on campus.

### Strengths:

- Students who are served by the Children's Center, including student parents and student assistants, have high retention and graduation rates.
- The Children's Center provides high quality early care and education services to the university community, is consistently full, has a substantial waiting list, and is responsive to the changing needs of student families. In partnership with other community agencies and university programs, the Children's Center is able to support students in crisis - helping them obtain services, food, housing, medical care, and other vital supports so they can concentrate on their academic studies.
- The Children's Center provides opportunities to student assistants to attend workshops and trainings, serve in leadership positions, set goals and reflect on their progress, and create a substantial professional resume.
- The Children's Center has been able to successfully work with other university departments and outside funders to secure substantial funding, expand the program, renovate spaces for children, hire and retain highly educated and experienced professional staff, to maintain the high level of quality the program is known for in the community. This year we wrote and were awarded grants that will bring over a million dollars of new funding to the Children's Center over the next four years.
- Professional staff at the Children's Center are leaders in the field. The director is the president of the Humboldt Local Child Care Council and sits on the Child Care subcommittee for Humboldt First 5, is a board member of the Council for California State University Children's Centers. The Assistant Director is a professor of Early Childhood Education at the College of the Redwoods. Two teachers are California Early Childhood Mentor Teachers. Another teacher created a well received presentation at the California Association for the Education of Young Children state conference. Both the Director and Assistant Director have Master's degrees in Early Childhood Education, and three teachers are in a Master's program currently.

### Areas of improvement:

- Although we were able to renovate the new facility at 1695 10th Street this summer and make some improvements, the outdoor space is poor with some elements that are hazards. The

outdoor spaces at our campus site have not been updated for over ten years. One area of focus for our program is to plan and implement improvements in our outdoor classrooms at both sites.

- Salaries for student assistants have not changed much in the last ten years. One area we want to look at carefully is how we can increase compensation for our student assistants.

The Children's Center is beginning a collaboration with Nature Explore to design and renovate our outdoor classrooms. Nature Explore is a nationally recognized leader in the field of early care and education and nature inspired outdoor spaces for children. We had an Educator and a Landscape Architect come visit our program late this Fall, and to have plans for work to be done this next summer. The training they did for staff and the plans we made as a team will guide our investments of time and resources in improving our outdoor environments.